

**DR. BECKY L. STELTZNER**  
**76 Tiverton Road**  
**Plumstead**  
**W.Cape Province**  
**SOUTH AFRICA**

Phone: [REDACTED]  
Email: [REDACTED]

**Postal Regulatory Commission**  
**Submitted 5/22/2021 5:26:43 AM**  
**Filing ID: 117752**  
**Accepted 5/25/2021**

22 May 2021

US Postal Regulatory Commission  
901 New York Avenue NW, Suite 200  
Washington, DC 20268-0001

Dear US Postal Regulatory Commission:

Re: N2021-1, proposed changes to the US Postal Service

You will notice that I am writing from outside the United States, but I am a US Citizen working in South Africa. I retain my citizenship and therefore, my right to vote. And up until recently, the US Postal Service has been the only way that I can vote. Cape Town only has a consulate, so if I want to vote at an embassy, I have to fly there (something I did not feel safe to do during Covid-19). My voting district in Wisconsin (Eau Claire) has only had a post office box number, not a street address, so I could not use a courier service. This was changed in 2020, but I still have strong opinions about ease and speed of voting by mail, due to all of the problems I had with voting in previous elections. In addition, I believe there are other serious problems with N2021-1.

Before the changes, my votes did not always make it in time, but after the proposed changes, the “lucky draw” as to whether a ballot gets to Wisconsin in the window period it needs to, will get worse if I have to rely on the US Postal Service. I hope Eau Claire keeps the street address on the ballots, so I don’t have problems again, but I write because the issue is larger than my own problems (which I think many other Americans have as well).

I write because of a belief that a postal service is a service. It should not be a profit-making organization. And while I realise that the USPS was designed as both a business and a service, it is clear that a business does not have to make huge profits, nor does it have to make sufficient profit to fund other governmental departments or budget issues. How much profit you make is your choice.

Whether or not anyone believes the proposed changes have a hidden political agenda, it is clear that delays in postal service delivery times affect much more of our daily lives than just voting, and the government’s job is to protect those daily lives. One example is medicine delivery, delays in which would affect my elderly parents if they were still alive, and certainly if these proposed changes are implemented, the chances are increasing that my increasingly elderly siblings might have problems with it, as will many other Americans. This is just one example.

I also want to point out that the financial situation of the postal service was not caused entirely by the postal service itself. It was, in large part, caused by Congress, because Congress siphoned off money to balance its budget over the years. The latest iteration of that is the requirement that the USPS “pre-fund” its entire healthcare costs, to the tune of about \$55 billion. I believe the public should not have to deal with worse service because of this. And of course, it can become a fatal downward spiral – cripple an institution, then change it so that it becomes so slow and expensive that no one wants to use it. It will collapse.

There are (I am over-generalizing a bit here), two types of business models. Make the service expensive and unwieldy, and few will be able to afford it or will use it. The other one is to make the service easy, fast and inexpensive, so while the profit margin is lower, you get the same end-income from having many more customers. The first is the model that N2021-1 will create, and the second is the model I would like the USPS to use. Mr. de Joy's proposed plan is definitely not that model, despite his claims that it will provide "excellent" service. It will not.

I understand that Mr. de Joy wants to rein in "losses", but I object to that characterization. We do not expect libraries to be profitable – they are a public service, and we don't view money spent on books as "losses", nor do we look at library fines as a way to fully subsidize a library. We certainly don't expect libraries to make so much money as to fund non-library services. Further, the money put into libraries is not characterized as a "government bailout". Likewise, the postal service is a public service. So while I do not want extravagant spending, I want a service that is faster and more efficient than what the proposed changes will give. I want the government to stop using profits from the postal service to cross-subsidize other things. I therefore object to the proposed changes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Becky L. Steltzner". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Becky L. Steltzner  
Senior Lecturer,  
SA College of Music  
University of Cape Town